

# University in Philadelphia Does Homework

Singaporean Students Find Attractive Alternatives

by Doug Barry

*U.S. Commercial Service*

American universities are competing with each other and with other universities in English-speaking countries, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada, for talented high school graduates from Asian countries. These students in many cases pay full tuition and enrich the learning environment by bringing with them different cultural perspectives.

According to a recent report released by the U.S. Census Bureau, receipts for educational services increased 11 percent in 2001, to \$11.5 billion, following an 8-percent increase in 2000. The number of foreign students studying in the United States increased 6.4 percent, the largest increase since 1980, to nearly 550,000. More than half of the foreign students attending American universities were undergraduate students, and more than half were from Asian countries.

A desire for more diversity is largely why St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia was attracted to Singapore to attempt to recruit the best and brightest from this island city-state. But as Sundar Kumarasamy, St. Joseph's assistant vice president for enrollment management,

recalls, it's tough to set up shop 12 times zones away in a place your university is unknown and no student has ever been recruited.

Undeterred, Kumarasamy immediately accepted U.S. Commercial

Service specialist Weng Hee Ho's offer to help in March 2002 under a Platinum Key Service package. Almost instantly St. Joseph's became visible and recruited its first MBA student from an information session held at the U.S. embassy two months later. "It would have taken us ages to establish a face in this market," says Kumarasamy, "but in very short

order we were in front of qualified students and their parents."

Soon after this first MBA student enrolled in the fall of 2002, Ho, assisted by his colleague Fazielah Ali, both based at the U.S. embassy in Singapore, went on to organize and execute a marketing campaign under the banner "Discover SJU." Subsequently, four students signed up for a familiarization tour to the campus. Ho accompanied the students on this trip, which also featured a conference on international management presented by SJU faculty and visits to New York City and Washington, D.C.

Were the Singaporean students sold on SJU? Susan Kassab, director for graduate and undergraduate admissions, was very pleased that two of the four students selected SJU to begin in the fall of 2003. One of the students—and her parents—selected St. Joseph's over the prestigious brand name of Cambridge University in the United Kingdom.

## OPENING DOORS FOR U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION

St. Joseph's success was made possible by the Platinum Key Service (PKS), which is available throughout



Photo courtesy of U.S. Commercial Service.

the world and consists of long-term tailored help to enter a new market or expand in existing markets. No surprise, St. Joseph's University recently signed up for a regional PKS package to use Singapore as a springboard to tap other markets in Asia. "Asia offers a big market for U.S. universities recruiting undergraduate and graduate students," Ho of the Commercial Service explains. "U.S. higher education enjoys a big competitive advantage, and there is an insatiable demand here." Adds Kassab, "We're tremendously impressed with what the U.S. Commercial Service has done and continues to do for our overseas student recruitment." ■

Students from Singapore tour the USA Trade Center in Washington, D.C.

### The Study USA Tour 2004

The Study USA Asian Tour in 2004 will feature at least six events in four countries. Register now at [www.buyusa.gov/studyusa](http://www.buyusa.gov/studyusa). Manila, Jakarta, Bangkok, New Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai will once again host Study USA fairs. Mix and match, according to your priorities, or choose them all.

#### How Do We Do It?

Prior to the events in each country, Commercial Service officers disseminate information about American schools participating in Study USA to thousands of potential students through pre-show seminars, trade events, the Internet, and media resources. Expanded Web advertising on major sites in different countries will result in thousands of hits at the [www.buyusa.gov/studyusa](http://www.buyusa.gov/studyusa) site prior to the events, as students seek updated information about participating schools and programs in each country. The site remains active year-round to provide content and links of interest found on the campus browser resource.

Information for students is featured in Korean, Japanese, and Thai.

At the events, American educators and students receive current information on the market and U.S. visas as a result of cooperation between the U.S. Commercial Service, local binational educational commissions, and the public affairs and consular sections of the U.S. embassy in each country.

The U.S. Commercial Service works with schools on a year-round basis to assist in marketing activities worldwide. Study USA is your annual meeting forum with decision-makers at the individual, corporate, and government levels. We also offer other marketing services such as Gold Key and single school promotions to follow up and expand upon your contacts after the events in your priority markets.

Whether your accredited school or organization is new to Asia or expanding its presence in Asian

markets, post-organized or certified, privately managed fairs on the Study USA 2004 Asian Tour offer the best option for your marketing dollar.

#### Schedule

Manila, Philippines  
February 8–9, 2004

Jakarta, Indonesia  
February 11–12, 2004

Bangkok, Thailand  
February 14–15, 2004

India  
February 17–18, 2004  
Oberoi Towers Hotel, Mumbai

February 20–21, 2004  
Inter-Continental Hotel, New Delhi

February 23–24, 2004  
Taj Coromandel Hotel, Chennai